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ABSTRACT

The New York City Board of Education's Family Living/Sex Education Program consisted of seminars and workshops which involved parents and teachers in open discussions about adolescent sexuality. Discussion topics included parent-child relations, family conflict resolution, psychosexual development, parents as educators, family size, and children with special needs. At the end of the program, data were collected through an attitude questionnaire administered at each workshop and used to recommend program improvements. Responses to the questionnaire indicated that seminars should consist of parent-child workshops and curriculum orientation sessions for parents, teachers, and administrators, and that at least one workshop should feature a guest lecturer. (JCD)

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# FINAL EVALUATION REPORT
Project Number: 5001-48-14401

SEMINARS FOR PARENTS
FAMILY LIVING/SEX EDUCATION
PROGRAM

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# I. EVALUATION ABSTRACT

PROGRAM: FAMILY LIVING/SEX EDUCATION

BUDGET # 5 0 0 1 DIVISION # 4 8 PROJECT # 0 4 4 0 5

FUNDING PERIOD: September 1, 1980 to June 30, 1981

FUNDING SOURCE: State Education Department

PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS: Parents and teachers of High School Outreach Program

SITE CHARACTERISTICS: Workshops were held at the following districts:

District 2 Manhattan
District 4 Manhattan
District 9 Bronx
District 16 Brooklyn
District 23 Brooklyn
District 27 Queens
District 31 Staten Island

MAJOR PROGRAM COMPONENTS: Seminars for parents and teachers on family life, and problems of parent/child communication about sex.

EVALUATION OBJECTIVE: To obtain information from an open-ended questionnaire that will be used to plan future seminars.

EVALUATION INSTRUMENT: Education Development Center (EDC) questionnaire of 12 open-ended questions distributed at the conclusion of each seminar.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS: Parents and teachers felt that the seminars offered them both an opportunity to share their views and personal feelings, and to learn how to communicate with children about sex. Sixty-six percent of the parents and 72 percent of the teachers enjoyed the seminars and hoped that more would be offered in the future.

## II. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

On the basis of New York City Health Department's statistics on teenage pregnancy, the Board of Education's Health and Physical Education Unit selected seven school districts for a special program in Family Living/Sex Education. The program consisted of seminars and workshops designed to involve parents in open, thoughtful, constructive discussions of topics related to adolescent sexuality. In addition, a training program was conducted for staff at the High School Outreach Program.

At the sessions for parents, discussion topics included: parent-child relations; communicating with children; dealing with family conflict; psychosexual development; parents as sex educators; family size; children with special needs; and parents helping parents. Four morning seminars, each about two hours long, were held in six districts. In the seventh district, the seminars were conducted in the evening at two sites.

Teachers of health, guidance, and home economics from the High School Outreach Program attended eight two-hour after-school workshops. The agenda of these workshops was similar to the parent series with the exception of the final seminar which focused on specific techniques in teaching sex education.

The seminars for parents were conducted by three workshop leaders, all of whom had had extensive experience in teacher training as well as in parent education. In the teacher training workshop, a specialist in sex education from the Division of Special Education and representatives from several agencies (Planned Parenthood, Maternal Infant Care, Family Planning, March of Dimes, NYC Department of Health) served as workshop leaders during the eight sessions.

## III. EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

Attendance at the seminars was monitored; however, many of the participants were reluctant to sign the attendance sheet. To maintain confidentiality and an atmosphere of trust, the participants in the seminars were not pressured to sign the attendance sheet.

An attitude questionnaire developed by the project staff was administered at each workshop. The survey was conducted to determine how the participants felt about their workshop experience and to obtain feedback on each session for program improvements. The evaluation form was developed by Educational Development Center (EDC) and was utilized for their "Seminars for Parents on Adolescent Sexuality."

## IV. INSTRUMENT USED

The Educational Development Center provided a questionnaire of 12 open-ended questions which was distributed at the conclusion of each seminar.

## V. NARRATIVE REPORT OF EVALUATION RESULTS

The survey revealed that 144 parents valued the seminars for the opportunity it provided them to share their views and personal feelings about sex. In addition, the program helped them to learn how to communicate better about sex with young and teenage children. The seminars were successful because of the frankness and rapport that were evident throughout all the sessions. The parents felt they were able to establish mutually helpful contacts and relationships.

Nineteen percent of the parents said that their thinking changed most with regard to sex education and communication; 8 percent changed most with regard to their open discussions with their children.

As a direct result of the seminars, 35 percent of the parents hoped to have more communication with their children.

Of the 11 teachers, some indicated that it was important to share their views and feelings, and felt that the last sessions on teaching techniques were the most helpful parts of the seminar. Eighteen percent of the teachers said that their thinking changed most with regard to human sexuality.

Both parents and teachers expressed interest in attending future seminars. Sixty-six percent of the parents and 72 percent of the teachers enjoyed the seminars and hoped that more would be offered. Twenty-eight percent of the parents and 36 percent of the teachers felt that other parents and teachers should participate in the seminars because they were very informative and interesting. Fifteen percent of the parents planned to inform peers and encourage them to attend workshops. Since parents wanted the seminars to continue, many parents and teachers planned to set up seminars on their own.

## VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

This program should be continued next year, and the staff should consider the following recommendations:

1. Seminars should have a parent/child workshop, because the majority of the parents want to learn how to communicate with their children.
2. Seminars should have workshops that will train parents and teachers to organize and conduct similar seminars for other parents and students.
3. In all of the districts , at least one workshop should be devoted to a guest lecturer, e.g., a doctor, psychiatrist or psychologist.
4. Sessions should be held for parents, teachers, and administrators to orient them to the new sex education curriculum to be instituted during the 1981-82 school year.

# APPENDIX

TABLE 1

VI. Participant Responses to Question 1:
"The single most helpful part of the seminar series was..."

| RESPONSES | PARENTS (N=144) | TEACHERS (N=11) | TOTAL (N=155) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Sharing of views and feelings | 25 (17%) | 3 (27%) | 28 (18%) |
| Discussion of homosexuality | 0 (0%) | 2 (19%) | 2 (1%) |
| The last session | 4 (3%) | 3 (27%) | 7 (5%) |
| All sessions were helpful | 13 (9%) | 0 (0%) | 13 (8%) |
| Tapes and films | 6 (4%) | 0 (0%) | 6 (4%) |
| Gaining more information about sex, birth control, veneral disease | 18 (13%) | 0 (0%) | 18 (12%) |
| How to deal with teenagers | 5 (3%) | 0 (0%) | 5 (3%) |
| Other | 27 (19%) | 3 (27%) | 30 (19%) |
| No response | 46 (32%) | 0 (0%) | 46 (30%) |

TABLE 2

Participant Responses to Question 2: "The least useful part for me was..."

| RESPONSES | PARENTS (N=144) | TEACHERS (N=11) | TOTAL (N=155) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Lectures | 0 (0%) | 2 (18%) | 2 (1%) |
| Birth control | 4 (3%) | 3 (28%) | 7 (5%) |
| Everything was useful/ interesting | 39 (27%) | 1 (9%) | 40 (26%) |
| Venereal disease | 4 (3%) | 1 (9%) | 5 (3%) |
| Films and tapes | 3 (2%) | 0 (0%) | 3 (2%) |
| Maternal Infant Care | 0 (0%) | 2 (18%) | 2 (1%) |
| Planned Parenthood | 3 (2%) | 0 (0%) | 3 (2%) |
| Other | 23 (16%) | 2 (18%) | 25 (16%) |
| No response | 68 (47%) | 0 (0%) | 68 (44%) |

TABLE 3

Participant Responses to Question 3: "I was most deeply touched by..."

| RESPONSES | PARENTS (N=144) | TEACHERS (N=11) | TOTAL (N=155 ) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Deep feelings and attitudes shared by parents | 14 (10%) | 2 (18.2%) | 6 (4%) |
| Film on venereal disease | 9 (6%) | 0 (0%) | 9 (6%) |
| Discussions on teenage pregnancy | 0 (0%) | 2 (18.2%) | 2 (1%) |
| Entire seminar | 3 (2%) | 0 (0%) | 3 (2%) |
| Tapes | 6 (4%) | 0 (0%) | 6 (4%) |
| Film on "Party Time" | 4 (3%) | 0 (0%) | 4 (3%) |
| Film on "Rape" | 11 (8%) | 0 (0%) | 11 (7%) |
| Role playing | 7 (5%) | 0 (0%) | 7 (4%) |
| Openness in the discussions | 30 (21%) | 1 (9%) | 31 (20%) |
| Other | 34 (24%) | 3 (27.3%) | 37 (24%) |
| No response | 26 (17%) | 3 (27.3%) | 39 (25%) |

TABLE 4

Participant Responses to Question 4: "I was most angry or irritated when..."

| RESPONSES | PARENTS (N=144) | TEACHERS (N=11) | TOTAL (N=155) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Being lectured | 0 (0%) | 2 (19%) | 2 (1%) |
| Films | 8 (6%) | 0 (0%) | 8 (5%) |
| Never angered or irritated | 13 (9%) | 0 (0%) | 13 (9%) |
| Discussion on sexuality | 0 (0%) | 1 (9%) | 1 (1%) |
| Sessions ended | 5 (3%) | 0 (0%) | 5 (3%) |
| Time limit | 1 (1%) | 1 (9%) | 2 (1%) |
| Participants disclosed attitudes towards sex | 2 (1%) | 1 (9%) | 3 (2%) |
| Other | 34 (24%) | 3 (27%) | 37 (24%) |
| No response | 81 (56%) | 3 (27%) | 84 (54%) |

TABLE 5

Participant Responses to Question 5: "The main new things I learned were..."

| RESPONSES | PARENTS (N=144) | TEACHERS (N=11) | TOTAL (N=155) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Venereal Disease | 16 (11%) | 1 (9%) | 17 (11%) |
| Homosexuality | 0 (0%) | 2 (18%) | 2 (1%) |
| Educate at an early age | 2 (1%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (1%) |
| Openness in the discussion | 2 (1%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (1%) |
| How to deal with sexual problems | 6 (4%) | 0 (0%) | 6 (4%) |
| Problems with teenagers | 5 (4%) | 0 (0%) | 5 (3%) |
| Parents want to know how to talk with children about sex and themselves | 26 (18%) | 0 (0%) | 26 (17%) |
| Types of contraception | 6 (4%) | 0 (0%) | 6 (4%) |
| Truth and honesty | 4 (3%) | 0 (0%) | 4 (3%) |
| Parents face similar situations with their children | 5 (4%) | 0 (0%) | 5 (3%) |
| Availability of resources | 0 (0%) | 1 (9%) | 1 (1%) |
| Other | 41 (28%) | 3 (27%) | 44 (28%) |
| No response | 31 (22%) | 4 (37%) | 35 (23%) |

TABLE 6

Participant Responses to Question 6:
"My thinking changed most with regard to..."

| RESPONSES | PARENTS (N=144) | TEACHERS (N=11) | TOTAL (N=155) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Teenagers' problems | 7 (5%) | 0 (0%) | 7 (4%) |
| Human sexuality | 3 (2%) | 2 (18%) | 5 (3%) |
| Premarital sex | 3 (2%) | 0 (0%) | 3 (2%) |
| Sex education and communication | 28 (20%) | 1 (9%) | 29 (19%) |
| Open discussion with my children | 12 (8%) | 0 (0%) | 12 (8%) |
| Birth Control | 4 (3%) | 0 (0%) | 4 (3%) |
| Learning to listen to my children | 2 (1%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (1%) |
| Allowing children to make their own discussion | 3 (2%) | 0 (0%) | 3 (2%) |
| Other | 24 (17%) | 3 (27%) | 27 (17%) |
| No response | 58 (40%) | 5 (46%) | 63 (41%) |

TABLE 7

Participant Responses to Question 7:
"I feel I need to know more about..."

| RESPONSES | PARENTS (N=144) | TEACHERS (N=11) | TOTAL (N=155) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Value clarification | 0 (0%) | 3 (27.3%) | 3 (2%) |
| Experimental behavior | 1 (1%) | 0 (0%) | 1 (1%) |
| Venereal disease | 7 (5%) | 0 (0%) | 7 (4%) |
| Understanding youngsters and teenagers and helping them to deal with their problems | 23 (16%) | 1 (9%) | 24 (15%) |
| Human sexuality | 7 (5%) | 2 (18.2%) | 9 (6%) |
| Birth control | 2 (1%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (1%) |
| Having open discussions with their children | 11 (8%) | 0 (0%) | 11 (7%) |
| The seminars | 4 (2%) | 0 (0%) | 4 (3%) |
| Everything | 4 (2%) | 0 (0%) | 4 (3%) |
| Other | 22 (16%) | 3 (27.3%) | 25 (16%) |
| No response | 63 (44%) | 2 (18.2%) | 65 (42%) |

TABLE 8

Participant Response to Question 8:
"As a group, I feel we (were, were not) able to establish mutally helpful contacts and relationships with each other that can go beyond the conclusions of these seminars. I think this is primarily due to..."

| RESPONSES | PARENTS (N=144) | TEACHERS (N=11) | TOTAL (N=155) |
|---|---|---|---|
| WERE NOT: time limitation | 0 (0%) | 2 (18%) | 2 (2%) |
| WERE: parents sharing similar problems | 11 (8%) | 1 (9%) | 12 (8%) |
| WERE: Mrs. Jacobson Educational Consultant | 5 (3%) | 0 (0%) | 5 (3%) |
| WERE: concern of parents involved | 8 (6%) | 0 (0%) | 8 (5%) |
| WERE: frankness of people involved; rapport that developed | 54 (37%) | 2 (18%) | 56 (36%) |
| Other | 34 (24%) | 2 (18%) | 36 (23%) |
| No response | 32 (22%) | 4 (37%) | 36 (23%) |

TABLE 9

Participant Responses to Question 9:

"I think other parents (should, should not) sign up for these seminars because..."

| RESPONSES | PARENTS (N=144) | TEACHERS (N=11) | TOTAL (N=155) |
|---|---|---|---|
| The seminars would make the parents aware of their children's problems | 3 (2%) | 0 (0%) | 3 (2%) |
| Opportunity to share values | 15 (10%) | 0 (0%) | 15 (10%) |
| Parents should: It helps parents to help their own family members | 16 (11%) | 0 (0%) | 16 (10%) |
| Parents should: there is a need for parent participation | 5 (3%) | 1 (9.1%) | 6 (4%) |
| Seminars are informative and interesting | 41 (28%) | 4 (36.4%) | 45 (29%) |
| The seminars can help solve problems | 4 (3%) | 0 (0%) | 4 (2%) |
| Should: Other | 33 (23%) | 4 (36.4%) | 37 (24%) |
| Should not: Other | 4 (3%) | 2 (18.1%) | 6 (4%) |
| No response | 23 (16%) | 0 (0%) | 23 (15%) |

TABLE 10

Participant Response to Question 10:

"As a direct result of my participation in these seminars, I plan to..."

| RESPONSES | PARENTS (N=144) | TEACHERS (N=11) | TOTAL (N=155) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Do further research and reading; seek out more seminars | 10 (7%) | 1 (9%) | 11 (7%) |
| Learn to listen to my children | 3 (2%) | 0 (0%) | 3 (2%) |
| Use techniques learned | 3 (2%) | 1 (9%) | 4 (3%) |
| Have a sex education program | 5 (4%) | 0 (0%) | 5 (3%) |
| Inform peers and encourage parents to attend workshops | 23 (16%) | 0 (0%) | 23 (15%) |
| Have more open communication with my own children | 50 (35%) | 0 (0%) | 50 (32%) |
| Other | 25 (17%) | 5 (46%) | 30 (19%) |
| No responses | 25 (17%) | 4 (36%) | 29 (19%) |

TABLE 11

Participant Responses to Question 11:

"If you were to plan similar seminars, I suggest that you..."

| RESPONSES | PARENTS (N=144) | TEACHERS (N=11) | TOTAL (N=155) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Get more parents students, fathers, and children involved | 16 (11%) | 0 (0%) | 16 (10%) |
| Improve audio-visual and communication techniques | 2 (2%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (1%) |
| Hold more seminars | 6 (4%) | 0 (0%) | 6 (4%) |
| Follow same format | 23 (16%) | 0 (0%) | 23 (15%) |
| Include professional lectures | 5 (3%) | 1 (9%) | 6 (4%) |
| Do more publicity and advertising | 6 (4%) | 0 (0%) | 6 (4%) |
| Leave more time for discussion | 2 (1%) | 2 (18%) | 4 (3%) |
| Hold longer seminars | 8 (6%) | 0 (0%) | 8 (5%) |
| Have seminars in the school | 2 (2%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (1%) |
| Other | 22 (15%) | 2 (18%) | 24 (16%) |
| No response | 52 (36%) | 6 (55%) | 58 (37%) |

TABLE 12

Participant Responses to Question 12: "I'd just like to add in closing..."

| RESPONSES | PARENTS (N=144) | TEACHERS (N=11) | TOTAL (N=155) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Enjoyed the seminars; hope more are offered; expressed thanks | 96 (67%) | 8 (73%) | 104 (67%) |
| Sorry to see seminars come to an end | 5 (3%) | 0 (0%) | 5 (3%) |
| Have fewer lectures | 0 (0%) | 1 (9%) | 1 (1%) |
| Other | 17 (12%) | 0 (0%) | 17 (11%) |
| No response | 26 (18%) | 2 (18%) | 28 (18%) |